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United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The Secretary-General continues to believe that the mandate of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific remains valid and that the Centre has been a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation and disarmament in the region. As it is evident from General Assembly resolutions, the regional dialogue being promoted by the Centre, through the organization of various disarmament meetings in Asia and the Pacific, has received wide support from Member States and academic groups within the region as a means of identifying pressing disarmament and security-related issues relevant to the region and exploring region-oriented solutions.

During the reporting period, from August 2002 to July 2003, the Centre continued to promote disarmament and security through the organization of meetings and conferences in the region (Kyoto, Japan, 7-9 August 2002; Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, 3-5 December 2002; and Bali, Indonesia, 10-11 February 2003). The Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States in the drafting and finalization of a treaty on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia by organizing an expert group meeting and a series of informal consultations among the Central Asian States as well as consultative meetings between those States and the five nuclear-weapon States. The Centre also continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status.

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Consultations on the relocation of the Centre continued with the host country. The final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be provided by the host country were forwarded to the Government of Nepal for consideration in December 2001 and April 2002, respectively. Follow-up reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities in December 2002, February and May 2003, and their response is awaited.

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I. Introduction

1. On 22 November 2002, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 57/92, entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific". In paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities; urged him to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively; and requested him to report to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. The present report is submitted in compliance with that request. It covers the activities of the Centre during the period from August 2002 to July 2003. A financial statement on the status of the Trust Fund for the Centre covering the year 2002 is contained in annex I. A list of planned activities of the Centre for which financial support from interested donors is being sought appears in annex II.

II. Activities of the Centre

3. The Secretary-General continues to believe that the mandate of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific remains valid and that the Centre has been a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation for peace and disarmament in the region. Consultations being carried out by the Director of the Centre with Member States and academic institutes within and outside the region, as well as meetings organized by the Centre, have confirmed the strong support for the Centre's role in encouraging regional and subregional dialogue for the enhancement of openness, transparency and confidence-building and the promotion of disarmament and security. In that connection, the value of regional meetings organized by the Centre has been highly commended by the General Assembly and the Asia-Pacific community.

4. In line with that approach and within the limited financial resources available through voluntary contributions of Member States and other interested organizations, the Centre organized, during the reporting period, a regional disarmament conference on "The Challenge of Terrorism for International Security and Disarmament: Global and Regional Impact", held in Kyoto, Japan, from 7 to 9 August 2002.

5. The conference, organized in close cooperation with the Government of Japan and the City of Kyoto, was attended by approximately 40 participants, representing Governments, research institutes, the media and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Kyoto conference considered, inter alia, the impact of the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks in the field of security, the relationship between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, the consolidation of existing legal norms, other weapons and new technologies, the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration and responses to terrorism by the United Nations and regional organizations.

6. The timely organization of the conference was highly commended by the participants, given the threat of terrorism to the security of the international community and, in particular, the threat of possible use of weapons of mass

destruction in terrorist acts. The participants reaffirmed that multilateral arms control and disarmament norms remain an effective basis from which to combat terrorism. In that connection, they called for the strengthening of existing terrorism-related treaties and conventions.

7. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to serve as a forum for the Asia-Pacific community to address security and disarmament concerns in the region through the organization of regional meetings. In that respect, the Centre and the Republic of Korea jointly organized a conference on disarmament and non-proliferation issues, entitled "Changing Security Dynamics and Implications for Disarmament and Non-proliferation", which took place in Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, from 3 to 5 December 2002.

8. Approximately 30 participants, representing Governments, research institutes and NGOs, attended the conference. The conference dealt with, among other matters, security assessments, review of the disarmament process, terrorism and weapons of mass destruction, disarmament and non-proliferation on the Korean peninsula, the issue of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, and the role of disarmament and the elimination of terrorism.

9. The Jeju conference was highly commended by the participants, as it provided them with an opportunity to address pressing security concerns relevant to disarmament, including the issue of non-proliferation in North-East Asia, weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, and intelligence in the context of verification.

10. During the period under review, the Centre organized a regional seminar to address the issue of small arms and light weapons, in close cooperation with the Governments of Indonesia and Japan. The seminar, entitled "Implementation of the Programme of Action Adopted at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects: the Asia-Pacific Perspective", was held in Bali, Indonesia, on 10 and 11 February 2003. It was attended by approximately 40 participants mainly from South-East Asia.

11. The seminar reviewed the role of national contact points and national coordination agencies, transborder cooperation and information-sharing, national laws and legislation and administrative procedures, export/import licensing system and marking, stockpile management and the role of civil society.

12. The seminar presented a first opportunity for designated national contact points in Asia and the Pacific to exchange information on their implementation of the Programme of Action. It addressed ways and means of increasing cooperation among the countries within the region and served as a means to assist Member States in their preparation for the First Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 7 to 11 July 2003. The Centre will continue to provide the Asia-Pacific States and regional organizations with the necessary assistance to implement the Programme of Action effectively.

13. The Centre also hosted a United Nations workshop on transparency in armaments in Asia and the Pacific in Bali, Indonesia, on 14 and 15 February 2003, in close cooperation with the Government of Indonesia and the Department for Disarmament Affairs of the Secretariat. The workshop was attended by approximately 40 participants and was intended to increase familiarity with and

promote greater participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations standardized instrument for reporting military expenditures.

14. During the reporting period, the Centre continued to maintain close interaction with the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific by inviting its members to participate in meetings it had organized. It also continued to explore the possibility of cooperation with regional and subregional organizations, including the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, academic institutes and NGOs within the Asia-Pacific region. The Centre initiated consultations with some ASEAN members and the secretariat of PIF to explore cooperation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

15. The Centre also continued to develop effective working relationships with disarmament-related international organizations. In that connection, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) were both invited to participate in the conference organized by the Centre in Kyoto. The Director of the Centre attended the regional workshop on the Chemical Weapons Convention organized by the OPCW secretariat that was held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, from 10 to 12 March 2003, a seminar for ASEAN States on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, organized by IAEA, held in Kuala Lumpur from 31 March to 2 April 2003 and a workshop on Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) International Cooperation and National Implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty for States in the Pacific, organized by the provisional technical secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, held in Nadi, Fiji, on 16 and 17 June 2003. The Centre intends to promote interaction and constructive working relationships with those organizations further.

16. The value of the regional dialogue promoted by the Centre through the organization of meetings in the Asia-Pacific region and other means has been fully appreciated in General Assembly resolutions. The continuation of that dialogue to identify pressing disarmament and security-related issues relevant to the region and to encourage region-oriented initiatives has gained the strong support of Member States and academic groups within the region. The Centre has developed a network, linking the Centre and its interlocutors within the region, as a way of exchanging data and information and exploring further collaboration for joint activities related to disarmament and security in Asia and the Pacific. The Centre's web site was launched in January 2002 and has since been expanded. A brochure on the work of the Centre has also been published and widely distributed.

17. Furthermore, the Centre has initiated preparations for a United Nations conference on disarmament issues, entitled "Arms control, disarmament and their future", to be held in Osaka, Japan, from 19 to 22 August 2003. The conference will address, among other matters, the current security in the region, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the fostering of a culture of peace.

18. In compliance with a request of the General Assembly contained in its resolutions 52/38 S, 53/77 A, 55/33 W and 57/69, the Centre continued to assist the five Central Asian States (C5 — Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan) in finalizing a treaty to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia. Since 1998, the Centre has organized six United Nations-sponsored expert group meetings to facilitate the process, the last of which was held in

Samarkand, Uzbekistan, from 25 to 28 September 2002. At that meeting, the C5 experts reached agreement on a treaty text for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia (the Samarkand text).

19. Consultations are under way between the C5 and the five nuclear-weapon States to seek the support of the latter for the Samarkand text. The Centre organized two meetings to facilitate those consultations. It also organized a series of informal consultations among the C5 with a view to resolving the remaining issues. The Centre intends to organize another United Nations-sponsored expert group meeting in the region in the near future to further the process. The Secretary-General hopes for an early conclusion and signing of a treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia as a concrete contribution to efforts of the international community towards nuclear non-proliferation. In that respect, he wishes to express his appreciation to the Government of Japan for its generous financial support for that initiative.

20. Moreover, in compliance with the request made by the General Assembly in its resolutions 53/77 D, 55/33 S and 57/67, the Centre continued to provide assistance to Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen its international security and nuclear-weapon-free status. For that purpose, the Centre organized an informal consultation among relevant United Nations bodies in January 2003 to discuss the status of implementation of the non-nuclear aspects of Mongolia's status.

21. As a means of promoting cooperation between the Centre and its constituents, the Centre provided technical and substantive services to the United Nations Association of Japan for its organization of the ninth Kanazawa Symposium on North-East Asia, on the theme "Security and stability in North-East Asia and restoring confidence", which was held from 10 to 12 June 2003. Disarmament efforts, terrorism and organized crime, fostering a culture of peace, the Korean peninsula and issues of refugees and water were discussed. The Director of the Centre attended the symposium and chaired the plenary sessions. The Centre will also assist the City of Nagasaki in the organization of a symposium on "The United Nations and Disarmament", scheduled to be held on 24 August 2003.

III. Staffing and financing

22. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 42/39 D of 30 November 1987, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific was established on the basis of existing resources and voluntary contributions that Member States and interested organizations may make to that end. By its resolution 57/92, the Assembly expressed its appreciation for the continuing political support and voluntary financial contributions to the Regional Centre, which are essential for its continued operation. It requested the Secretary-General to provide the Regional Centre with the necessary support, within existing resources, in carrying out its programme of activities. The Assembly also urged the Secretary-General to ensure the physical operation of the Regional Centre from Kathmandu within six months of the date of signature of the host country agreement and to enable the Centre to function effectively.

23. In that connection, consultations continued with the host Government to expedite the process of relocating the Centre to Kathmandu. It should be recalled

that the final version of a draft host country agreement and a draft memorandum of understanding on the operational costs to be provided by Nepal were forwarded to the Nepalese authorities for consideration on 6 December 2001 and 12 April 2002, respectively. As a follow-up, reminders were sent to the Nepalese authorities on 9 December 2002, 3 February 2003 and 6 May 2003, and a response is awaited.

24. During the reporting period from August 2002 to July 2003, voluntary contributions in the amount of $36,000 were received. The Secretary-General wishes to express his gratitude to the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Mongolia for their contributions.

25. In addition, the Secretary-General wishes to express his appreciation to the Governments of Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Uzbekistan and to the City of Kyoto for their financial and technical support for the United Nations conferences and meetings organized by the Centre during the past year. He is gratified by the continued political and financial support for the Centre from the region.

26. The Regional Centre's current staff consists of the Director and one General Service staff member.

IV. Conclusions

27. **The Centre continued to serve as a useful forum for regional and subregional dialogue on specific security concerns and global and regional disarmament issues and as an instrument for assisting regional initiatives in the field of disarmament and security. That was highly commended by States members of the Asia-Pacific community.**

28. **In order to promote further cooperation and interaction, the Centre expanded its contacts with academic institutes, foundations and regional and subregional organizations within Asia and the Pacific as well as with disarmament-related international organizations. The Centre succeeded in raising public awareness about the developments and trends in the field of disarmament and security in the region. The Centre was able to expand its outreach to its constituents further through its web site and through the production and wide distribution of a brochure providing information on its various activities.**

29. **In order for the Centre to expand its activities, which are solely dependent on the voluntary contributions of Member States and interested organizations, increased and stable financial support is essential. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation for the contributions received and reiterates his appeal to Member States, particularly those in the Asia-Pacific region, to continue to make or increase contributions to the Centre in support of its programme of activities.**

Annex I

Status of the Trust Fund for the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific covering the year 2002

	(United States dollars)
I. Fund balance, 1 January 2002	137 196
II. Income, 1 January-31 December 2002	
Voluntary contributions[a]	36 000
Interest income	10 500
Other miscellaneous income	44 241
Subtotal	**227 937**
III. Expenditures	
1 January-31 December 2002	–
Prior period adjustments	(3 000)
IV. Fund balance, 31 December 2002	224 937

Note: This information is based on the interim financial statement for the biennium 1 January 2002-31 December 2003, as at 31 December 2002.

[a] 2002: Republic of Korea ($15,000), Mongolia ($1,000).
2003: Republic of Korea ($20,000).

Annex II

Planned activities of the Centre

Project I

Title of the project

United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues on "Arms control, disarmament and their future"

Purpose

Assist the Asia-Pacific community to promote dialogue on international security and disarmament.

Location

Osaka, Japan

Duration

4 days (19-22 August 2003)

Number of participants

60 participants, including government officials, academics and NGO representatives

Cost estimates

(In United States dollars)

(a) Travel of participants	127 400
(b) Travel of staff	25 100
(c) Operating expenses	25 000
Total	**177 500**

Project II

Title of the project

United Nations-sponsored expert group meeting on the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaty

Purpose

To enable the C5 to work out their common position with regard to the comments of the nuclear-weapon States on the Samarkand text of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaty.

Location

Tashkent, Uzbekistan

Duration

4 days (September 2003)

Number of participants

10 (2 experts from each Central Asian State)

Cost estimates

(In United States dollars)

(a) Travel of participants	12 700
(b) Travel of staff	46 400
(c) Operating expenses	30 950
Total	**90 050**

Project III

Title of the project

Follow-up conference to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

Purpose

To promote the implementation of the Programme of Action among the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, taking into account the results of the First Biennial Meeting of States.

Location

South Pacific

Duration

3 days (March or April 2004)

Number of participants

Approximately 30 participants from within the Asia-Pacific region.

Cost estimates

(In United States dollars)

(a) Travel of participants	48 500
(b) Travel of staff	25 000
(c) Operating expenses	22 000
Total	**95 500**